



Austin Cycling Association  
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### **Bicyclist Safety Program and Adult Helmets**

On May 31, 2006 the Executive Committee of the Austin Cycling Association approved this statement for recommendation to the Austin Cycling Association (ACA) membership. On June 5, 2006 the ACA membership approved this statement.

Currently, a small group of concerned citizens are working to introduce citywide legislation to require the wearing of protective helmets by adult cyclists. This move is driven by a sincere desire to enhance the safety of cyclists.

The Austin Cycling Association will support a community awareness and education outreach campaign with the goals of reducing bicyclist crashes and strongly encouraging adults to voluntarily wear helmets.

The Austin Cycling Association will not support a mandatory adult helmet ordinance for the City of Austin.

The ACA supports the following activities as part of a community awareness and education outreach campaign as a means to significantly improve bicyclist safety and to reduce the social, physical and economic cost of bicycle crashes to individuals and to society:

- Adult (and child) bicyclist safety education.
- Widespread community campaign to strongly encourage bicycling and voluntary adult helmet use.
- Provision of low-cost and no-cost helmets to low-income adults and children.
- Roadway designs that accommodate bicyclists. Specifically, update and implement the Austin Bike Plan Part II.
- Share the Road campaign.
- Enforcement of existing traffic safety laws.
- Bicyclist and motorist traffic ticket diversion program.

The ACA does require that all participants in our organized rides wear a helmet. We require helmets because we accept that scientifically valid studies have shown that wearing a properly fitted helmet can help cyclists survive some types of head and brain trauma. (Harborview)

The ACA believes that a community campaign will be more effective in improving bicyclist safety and helmet use through education, and that the campaign will allow adults to make informed decisions about their personal health and safety when riding a bicycle.

The ACA proposes that the cycling community, public and private organizations, and the City of Austin work together to develop, fund, and implement a comprehensive Bicyclist Safety Program that incorporates a community awareness and education outreach campaign with the goals of reducing bicyclist crashes and strongly encouraging adults to voluntarily wear a helmet. We pledge to support an effective Bicyclist Safety Program that benefits all citizens of Austin.

# Comprehensive Bicyclist Safety Program

Austin Cycling Association

August 15, 2006

Health and Safety Subcommittee



## ACA A Part of the Solution

- 1,500 paid members
- 501(c)(3) for 25 years
- Members from all walks of life
- Volunteers and one part-time paid staff
- Committed to making Austin a Bicycle Friendly Community
- Provided thousands of free helmets to kids
- Provided hundreds of hours of bike safety education to kids and adults

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## Our Goals

- Prevent bicycle crashes from happening in the first place.
- Austin to be a Bicycle Friendly Community at the Silver level within five years.
- Develop a plan the cycling community can support.

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## Objectives Today

- Get recommendation from the subcommittee:
  - How to work with City staff (public works, parks and recreation, public information, health and human services) to convene a task group including representatives of the cycling community to create a plan of action for a comprehensive safety program.
  - 60 days
  - Report back to the Subcommittee/Council

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## Become a Bicycle Friendly Community

- Engineering
- Education
- Encouragement
- Enforcement
- Evaluation



## Engineering

- Design/implement roadways that accommodate cyclists
  - Build facilities that accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. Bike lanes, bike paths, wide shoulders, signage, traffic calming, sidewalks, etc.
- Update/implement the Bicycle Plan Part II
  - Adopted in May 1998
  - \$10 million (2000 bond) still waiting to build Part II

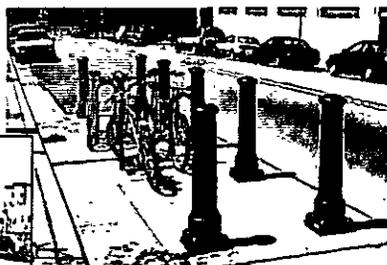
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# Engineering



Stop doing unsafe things!



Start doing safe things!

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# Engineering

- **Actions**

- Create Bicyclist/Pedestrian Advisory Task Group: COA, Travis County, CAMPO, TxDOT, Cyclist organizations
- Review projects that impact cyclists and pedestrians in early stages
- Hire 2 dedicated fulltime Planners to complete the Bike Plan Part II

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# Education

- Create an Adult/Child safety initiative in City of Austin
  - Community bicycle safety events
  - Adult traffic safety courses

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# Education



All ages!



All parts of the city!

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# Education

- Actions
  - Train-the-Trainers. COA employees, staff, volunteers
  - Children's program at P&R and Neighborhood centers
    - Summer and Weekends
  - Train AISD via SuperCyclist and Safe Routes to School in cooperation with TBC
  - Delivery through neighborhood associations
  - Funding for ATC HHS Youth and Injury Prevention program
  - Integration into the Steps to a Healthier Austin Program (ithrive)

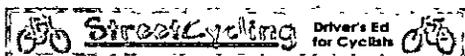
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# Education

ACA invites Council and staff to take the national bicyclists traffic safety course

- 4 hours of classroom leading to a certificate of attendance
- 5 hours on-bike leading to a Road I completion certificate



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# Encouragement

- Strongly encourage bicycling and voluntary adult helmet use.
  - Public communication campaign
- Provide low/no cost helmets as needed
  - Develop funding sources and distribution
- Create a Share the Road Campaign

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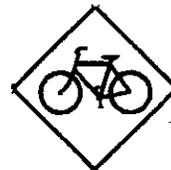
# Encouragement



Friends and Families riding together!

Everyone sharing the road!

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## Encouragement

- Actions
  - Public awareness campaign through electric bill insert, PSA Radio and television, COA PIO, Austin City News, COA Website

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## Enforcement

- Encourage enforcement of existing traffic safety laws
  - Encourage APD officers to enforce applicable laws for both cyclists and motorists.
  - Create a bicyclist and motorist traffic citation diversion program

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# Enforcement



Motorists need  
to be reminded  
of the rules!



So do adult and child  
cyclists!



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# Enforcement

- **Actions**
  - Provide training for APD on applicable laws
  - Institutionalize a traffic safety course
  - Work with the courts to have this option available

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## Evaluation

- Develop and implement an evaluation protocol
  - Safety measurement criteria and provide on-going data collection and analysis
  - Education delivery, helmet use, crash data, injury data, traffic citations, traffic volume, trips by bike, etc.
- Modify the programs as required

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## Bottom Line

- Endorse the Bicycle Friendly Community effort.
- Councilmember to sponsor this project
- Integration into the Steps to a Healthier Austin Program (ithrive)
- Reschedule Council helmet ordinance vote for 60 days to allow development of comprehensive plan.
- Hire 2 fulltime Planners to complete Bike Plan Part II
- Fund the H&HS Injury Prevention Program
- Develop a bike safety and helmet use PSA campaign

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## Thank You For Listening!

- We look forward to working with the City to help prevent bike crashes and making Austin more safe and bicycle-friendly.

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